

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Kenai Peninsula Delegation

SENATOR PETER A. MICCICHE, DISTRICT O
REPRESENTATIVE BEN CARPENTER, DIST. 29
REPRESENTATIVE GARY KNOPP, DIST. 30



Official Business

SENATOR GARY STEVENS, DISTRICT P
REPRESENTATIVE SARAH VANCE, DIST. 31

January 23, 2019

Reed Morisky
PO Box 83707
Fairbanks, AK 99708

Dear Chairman Morisky and Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BoF),

Fisheries are of extraordinary importance to all Alaskans, including those Alaskans from all user groups on the Kenai Peninsula. Therefore, the actions of the BoF are carefully scrutinized for fairness and adequate public process. As we have recently heard the importance of "rebuilding the public trust", many Alaskans were surprised by the lack of public process displayed by the Board on January 18, 2019 when the rotating location of the Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) Finfish meeting was moved from the Kenai Peninsula to Anchorage.

A recent contrasting example that included adequate public notice and participation took place on February 2nd 2018, when the Board published notice of their intent to revisit the 2020 UCI Finfish meeting location at their March 6-9 meeting in Anchorage. This gave the public more than 30 days notice. Individuals submitted on-time public comments to be included in the Board's packet and gave in-person testimony. No such process was included in the sudden January 18th decision.

Last week, during the Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim Finfish meeting in Anchorage, Chairman Morisky indicated that the board would again be taking up the issue of the location of the 2020 UCI Finfish meeting. He made this statement on Tuesday after the public comment period had closed, when the meeting was already underway. We are not aware of any prior public notice on the website or elsewhere that this item was again up for consideration.

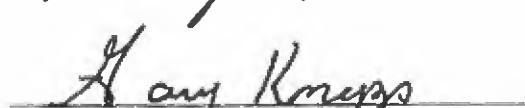

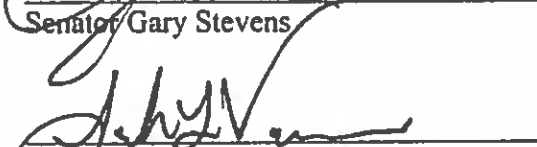
Furthermore, Kenai Peninsula elected and public officials were misled when they were informed by Chair Morisky on two separate occasions that the vote on the 2020 meeting location would not take place on that day. The Kenai Peninsula officials felt comfortable enough with those emphatic statements that they left soon after the BoF break for lunch and after one last guarantee by the Chair that the vote would not take place. The public later learned that the vote did take place rather immediately after lunch, apparently through a decision made behind closed doors, out of the view of the public and again, without opportunity for public testimony.

The Alaska BoF was created to establish a public process for conserving and allocating fisheries resources for all user groups. The function of public notice helps us ensure that members of the public have an opportunity to comment on matters of importance to them on resources that

belong to all Alaskans. We feel that the public process was circumvented at the January 18th meeting.

We support Governor Dunleavy's desire to restore the people's trust in government. The Alaska BoF has a responsibility to ensure that official actions are beyond reproach. Although we do not demand a particular final result, the legislative representatives of the people of the Kenai Peninsula request that you rescind your action to move the 2020 UCI Finfish meeting to Anchorage, which would allow for adequate notice to revisit the issue in a process that includes full and appropriate public participation.

Sincerely,


Senator Peter Micciche
Representative Ben Carpenter
Representative Gary Knopp
Senator Gary Stevens
Representative Sarah Vance

Cc:

The Honorable Governor Mike Dunleavy
John Jensen
Orville Huntington
Alan Cain
Israel Payton
Robert Ruffner
Fritz Johnson
Glenn Haight